What is claimed is:

1. A system for initiating scheduled program processing functions for use in a video decoder receiving packetized program information from different broadcast sources, said packetized program information from an individual broadcast source containing program content, system timing and program specific information data, comprising:

selection means for selecting a desired program produced by a broadcast source;

means for tuning to receive packetized program information containing said program; and

a processor for identifying and acquiring system timing data comprising a current time reference indication provided by said broadcast source in said packetized program information wherein

said processor derives a time clock based on a current time reference indication produced by a particular broadcast source and uses said derived time clock in initiating scheduled processing functions for programs derived from said particular broadcast source.

2. A system according to claim 1 wherein, in initiating scheduled processing functions

said processor disregards a time clock derived from a current time reference indication produced by a source other than said particular broadcast source.

3. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said processor updates a stored scheduling time clock with a clock value derived from a current time reference indication produced by said particular broadcast source prior to using said scheduling time clock in initiating scheduled processing functions for programs derived from said particular broadcast source.

4. A system according to claim 1, wherein in the absence of a valid current time indication being available from said particular broadcast source

said processor initiates scheduled processing functions using a clock value derived from a current time reference indication produced by a source other than said particular broadcast source.

5. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said processor derives a second time clock for display to a user and said second time clock is different to said derived time clock used in initiating scheduled processing functions for programs.

6. A system according to claim 5, wherein

said second time clock is a filtered time clock to prevent a user from seeing an abrupt time change discontinuity.

7. A system according to claim 5, wherein

said second time clock is updated during periods when said second time clock is not displayed to prevent a user from seeing an abrupt time change discontinuity.

8. A system according to claim 5, wherein

said second time clock is updated using current time reference indications independently of the broadcast source of said current time reference indications.

9. A system according to claim 5, wherein

said second time clock is updated using current time reference indications from a single source.

10. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said processor initiates a scheduled processing function in response to a user selection made via a displayed electronic program guide.

11. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said processor initiates scheduled processing functions including at least one of, a) program recording, b) program playback and c) program selection and display.

12. A system according to claim 1, wherein

said tuning means tunes to receive said packetized program information transmitted on a particular RF transmission channel carrier frequency used by said particular broadcast source, and

said processor identifies and acquires system timing data provided by said particular broadcast source using a) a data identifier and b) a table identifier.

13. A method for forming composite program guide information from program guide information received from a plurality of different broadcast sources, said program guide information from an individual broadcast source containing system timing data comprising a current time reference indication provided by said individual broadcast source, comprising the steps of:

forming channel map information including at least one identification number for use in identifying a broadcast channel and for associating said broadcast channel with a broadcast source;

incorporating said channel map information and current time reference indications produced by a plurality of broadcast sources into said composite program guide information;

forming said composite program guide information to associate a particular current time reference indication with a particular individual broadcast source; and

incorporating said composite program guide information into packetized data for output to a transmission channel.

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14. A system for initiating scheduled program processing functions using an electronic program guide for use in a video decoder receiving packetized program information from different broadcast sources, said packetized program information from an individual broadcast source containing program content, a current time reference indication and program specific information data, comprising:

selection means for selecting a desired program produced by a broadcast source;

means for tuning to receive packetized program information containing said desired program;

a processor for initiating scheduled processing of said desired program in response to a user selection made via a displayed electronic program guide, said processor initiates said scheduled processing using a time clock derived from a current time reference indication produced by a particular broadcast source associated with said desired program; and

means for displaying a second time clock different to said derived time clock.

15. A system according to claim 14, wherein

said second time clock is a filtered time clock to prevent a user from discerning a time change discontinuity.

16. A system according to claim 14, wherein

said second time clock is updated during periods when said second time clock is not displayed to prevent a user from discerning a time change discontinuity.

17. A system according to claim 14, wherein

said second time clock is updated using current time reference indications from a single source.

18. A system according to claim 14, wherein

said second time clock is independent of said derived time clock and is received in a dedicated program guide channel.

19. A system according to claim 18, wherein

said second time clock is embedded in the content of said dedicated program guide channel.

20. A system according to claim 18, wherein

said second time clock is presented in said displayed electronic program guide.

21. A method for initiating scheduled program processing functions for use in a video decoder receiving packetized program information from different broadcast sources, said packetized program information from an individual broadcast source containing program content, system timing and program specific information data, comprising the steps of:

tuning to receive packetized program information containing a desired program produced by a broadcast source;

identifying and acquiring system timing data comprising a current time reference indication received from said broadcast source in said packetized program information;

deriving a time clock based on a current time reference indication produced by a particular broadcast source; and

initiating scheduled processing functions for programs from said particular broadcast source using said derived time clock.

22. A method according to claim 21 including the step of

disregarding a time clock derived from a current time reference indication produced by a source other than said particular broadcast source.

23. A system according to claim 21, wherein said initiating scheduled processing functions step comprises

initiating a function including at least one of, a) program recording, b) program playback and c) program tuning and display.

24. A method for initiating scheduled program processing functions using an electronic program guide for use in a video decoder receiving packetized program information from different broadcast sources, said packetized program information from an individual broadcast source containing program content, a current time reference indication and program specific information data, comprising the steps of:

selecting a desired program produced by a broadcast source;

tuning to receive packetized program information containing said desired program;

deriving a time clock from a current time reference indication received from a particular broadcast source associated with said desired program;

initiating scheduled processing of said desired program using said derived time clock in response to a user selection made via a displayed electronic program guide; and

means for displaying a second time clock different to said derived time clock.

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